Mr. WADSWORTH's

LEGACY,

Being His

Serious Exhortation

TO AN

Holy Life.

OR,

A PLEA for the absolute necessity of Inherent Righteousness in those that Hope to be Saved.

Whereunto is now added, an *Elegy* on the *AUTHOR'S* Death.

Heb. XII. xiv. *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.*

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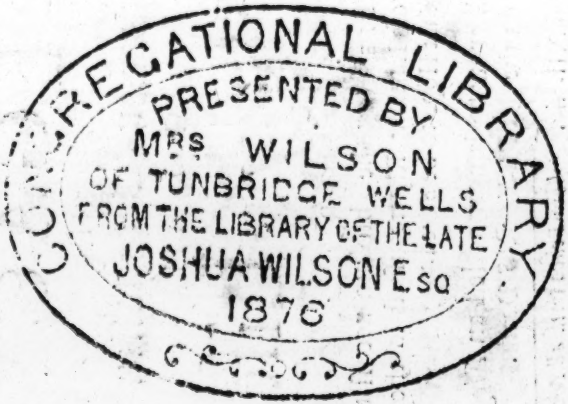
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1876

TO

My HEARERS;

WHOSE

SOULS are Precious to my God and Saviour; and, I dare say, to Me.

SIRS,

THE *Remembrance of the strange Providences of my God, that were apparent in bringing me to be your Teacher, and have born me company ever since in the Work of the Ministry amongst*

you, makes me think I was born, and ſtill continue in the Land of the Living, for your ſakes; for the Service of Your Immortal Souls; to help forward your Salvation from that conſuming, burning Wrath, that hangs over your Heads, till Chriſt be formed in you, and your Nature is changed from what is earthly and ſenſual, to that which is Divine. This Exhortation to an Holy Life, *I ſend you; as being very confident, that without it, not one of you ſhall ever ſee the Face of God, but to your ſhame and confuſion: If I preſs it hard upon your Conſciences, blame me not; for, it is my full Belief, you muſt be damned without it; and my love and pity to you, conſtrains me*

to

to do my beſt to prevent ſo ſad a Judgment. If you wonder how I dare venture to ſpeak ſo much to you in Print; I tell you, I dare do any thing for your ſakes, yea, hazard the Reputation of my Diſcretion, rather than be thought defective in my care to your never-dying Spirits. It comes not ſeldome to my Thoughts, and lyeth not a little preſſing on my Spirits: Ah, what ſhall I do more for poor Newington, *to help them towards Heaven, before I dye? Somewhat I have done already, as many of you can bear me witneſs, when with prayers and tears, not only publickly, but from one houſe to another,* I have beſeeched you to be reconciled to God; *and it is my greateſt grief I have theſe*

ſix Years ſince my coming amongſt you, that I have done no more: But, Alas! what ſhall I, or what can I do more? I would you could but tell me. Shall I come and live in all your Families, that I may be continually preſent to inſtruct, pray with, comfort, reprove, and over-ſee you? This is all impoſſible; I am but one Man, and can no more multiply my Preſence, than I can my Perſon: Or, ſhall I daily follow you from Houſe to Houſe? How can it be? My poor publick Work is great abroad, and not ſmall at home: Beſides, the care of a ſelected People lies upon me, that preſſeth more than moſt Men imagine, except them that feel it: And I am but a man, & have but the ſtrength of a Man, ſubject to bodily Infirmities

mities with my Bretheren. But how-ever, ſhall promiſe to do my beſt in this kind, as I have begun: and to ſupply the want of my conſtant Preſence with you, I have ſent you my whole Heart in Print, that it may ſpeak to you when I am abſent: It is but little, yet I intended it ſhould have been leſs; but it is well, it is no more. Do but you accept it as kindly as it is offered, and improve it as faithfully, as it was Conſcientiouſly penned, and I ſhall deſire no more; being very confident, it will then run and proſper; Which is the thing that is moſt earneſtly prayed for,

By him whom the Lord
hath made your Teacher.
Tho. Wadſworth.

A Serious Exhortation TO AN *HOLY LIFE.*

OR,

A PLEA for the abſolute neceſſity of Inherent Righteouſneſs in thoſe that Hope to be Saved.

Matth. V. xx.

I ſay unto you, That, except your righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, you ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

STay Reader, Thou haſt peruſed the Text, and canſt not but ſee that it concerns thy eternal life, or Death. I prethee anſwer me

this one queſtion, and then, in the fear of God, Read on.

Reader, thou art a dying Man or Woman, Tell me, when thy Breath is gone, thy Eyes cloſed, thy Bell hath towled, and thy Body coffin'd up for the grave, then, then, would'ſt thou rather have thy Soul in Heav'n or Hell, in Joy or Torment, with God or Devils? For God's ſake make a pauſe, and give me thine Anſwer before thou do'ſt proceed. Tell me, Art thou one that careſt not whither thou goeſt? or mak'ſt no matter whether it be to Heaven or Hell? Is either of them to thee indifferent? And art thou reſolved to perſiſt in this Indifferency? If it be ſo Sinner, I adviſe thee throw down the Book; and, as thou loveſt thy Soul, read not a Letter more: For I ſo love, and pity thee, as to thoſe Sorrows, that within a few Days, nay, a few Hours, thou muſt certainly endure, that I am loth that this ſheet ſhould help to wind thee up for Hell,

or

or any ways conduce to increaſe thy pains, or augment thy torments: For know Sinner, This is the Nature of that Goſpel of Chriſt, which we preach or write, that it either ſoftens or hardens: It is a ſavour of life to Life, or of death to Death, to him that reads or hears it: It will either prepare thee for Heaven, or ripen thee for Hell; For, of that very Jeſus, by whom only thou canſt hope for Salvation, it was propheſied, *Luke* 20. 34. *Behold, this Child is ſet for the fall and riſing again of many in* Iſrael.

Reader, perſwade thy ſelf of this, That Jeſus Chriſt and his written or preached Goſpel, if they prove not means to the raiſing thee from that ſtate of Sin and Death, wherein by Nature thou lieſt, they will prove the Inſtruments of that fatal Fall, that thou ſhall never recover to Eternity: and of this very nature are theſe lines thou art now peruſing (being, I am confi-

confident according to the mind of God) I ſay therefore again, if thou art one that haſt lived an unrighteous, ungodly life, and art reſolved not to change, I beſeech thee caſt by the Book and do not read it, for why ſhould it do any thing to promote thy ruine?

But if thou art a Man or Woman that canſt not dare to think of being damned; but trembleſt at the very name or thought of it: if thou doeſt heartily deſire when thou leaveſt this poor, empty, miſerable world, to exchange it for that full, rich, and glorious Kingdom of God above, then come away, and I will lead thee into the Path of Life, and tell thee what a Man or Woman thou muſt be, and what a life thou mayeſt and muſt live, if ever thou hopeſt to live in that deſired and incomparably bleſſed inheritance of the Saints.

Hoping now I have got a ſerious atten-

attentive Soul to ſpeak to (for ſuch Reader, I preſume thou art) let me firſt make bold to preſs thee to a review of the Text.

I ſay unto you, Except your Righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye can in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

This Verſe is a part of that Bible, that Thou and I, and all the Chriſtian World do take to be the Word of God, which is as free from any lye or falſhood, as the Sun-beams are from darkneſs; I ſhall not therefore injure thee ſo much, (as if I did miſtruſt thee) to ask whether thou believeſt this portion of Scripture to be true or falſe? but rather doſt thou believe, that it is ſo written there as here it is tranſcribed? if thou doubteſt, take thy Bible, and turn to the Chapter and the Verſe: if thou wilt take it for granted, on my word, I profeſs, I have not, I would not deceive Thee for a World. *The*

The firſt part of the Text opened.

(*I ſay unto you.*) *To you*! Who are thoſe? Why, thoſe that were preſent at that time, in which Chriſt was preaching this Sermon: They were his Diſciples, his Followers; ſuch as owned him for their Saviour, and called him Lord and Chriſt: In a word, they are ſuch as thou profeſſeſt thy ſelf to be that art my Reader.

2. *I ſay unto you.* Who is this (*I*)? It was he that preached this Sermon, Jeſus Chriſt; it was Chriſt, not *Matthew* that did Record it: It was Chriſt, and not I, that am about to plead with thee at this time for thy Life. And now thou knoweſt the Author, I preſume, the Text will have ſome Authority upon thy Heart. I hope thou wilt not ſay of Jeſus Chriſt as the prophane worldlings ſay of us, his Miniſters, That we are a company of prating ſawcy Fellows; and they hope, that all is not true that we

ſay;

ſay; and they are confident, that God is more merciful, than we Preachers would make them believe. But think Reader, it is not I, nor any Miniſter on Earth, that is the Preacher in my Text: It is Jeſus Chriſt, the Maſter of us all: And canſt thou hope it is not true, that Chriſt here tells thee? Were not this all one as to hope Jeſus Chriſt is a Lyar? and is not this to make thy ſelf a Blaſphemer? Or, dareſt thou be ſo impudent to ſay, or think, That God is more merciful than Chriſt hath made him? What, canſt thou think thy gracious Saviour would deceive thee? or that the Son of God would make falſe reports of God his Father? He tells thee the contrary, if thou haſt a mind to believe him, *Joh.* 12. 49. *I have not ſpoken of my ſelf; but the Father which ſent me, He gave me Commandment what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak.* And, wilt thou dare yet to un-ſay all

his

his ſayings, though he tells thee, he ſays nothing, but what God his Father commanded him? If he tells thee plainly, *Except thy Righteouſneſs exceeds the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, thou ſhalt in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; Wilt thou boldly contradict all, and ſay, that notwithſtanding whatever Jeſus Chriſt hath ſaid, I yet hope to be ſaved? yea, though thou haſt no righteouſneſs at all, or ſuch as falls ſhort of what the Phariſees had; wilt thou give the lye both to God the Father, and the Son?

No, ſinner, no, I know thou haſt not ſuch hard thoughts of the Saviour of the World, to think he is a lyar. Thou calleſt him Jeſus Chriſt, and confeſſeſt him to be the Son of God, and that it is impoſſible he ſhould lye; yea, I know thou wilt confeſs he here ſpeaks true, and what he ſpeaks, he ſpeaks to thee; *That except Thy righteouſneſs exceed that of the Phariſees,*

riſees, thou canſt by no means be ſaved. Doſt thou believe it? Anſwer me: Doſt thou verily believe, That except Thou *A. B.* by name, proveſt a more righteous Man or Woman than ever any Scribe or Phariſee was, thou canſt in no caſe enter into Heaven? Come, come, I know thou believeſt it; as thou loveſt Heaven then, and thine own Soul, I intreat thee pronounce theſe words after me, but ſpeak them ſeriouſly to thine own Conſcience. I, *A. B. Who am reading this Book, do (in the preſence of God, that ſearcheth my heart, and will judge me at the laſt day) unfeignedly believe, that except I am by the power of the Spirit, through the preaching of the Word, made a more righteous Man or Woman than ever any Scribe or Phariſee, yea and this before I dye; I never hope by any means to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but muſt aſſuredly, as now I am reading, within a few days be in everlaſt-*

verlaſting Torments, where I ſhall weep and wail, and gnaſh my Teeth, without all remedy.

Haſt thou offended ſo much? yea, and unfeignedly? yea, as in the preſence of God, the Searcher of thy Heart? *Yea.*

Well ſaid: Now let me tell thee, Thou haſt taken one ſtep towards Heaven: Thou art half way there already. Ah Sinner, be not ſo much thine own Enemy, as to with-draw thy foot, and recall thy words! Why ſhould'ſt thou repent that ſtep that is taken towards a Kingdom that is ſo bleſſed, or draw in that breath that hath filled thy Sails, and will make thy Voyage to Heaven both quick & eaſie, if it continue? For, know Reader, that when thy Soul is once throughly convinced of that Righteouſneſs, that is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, half the Work of thy Converſion is done, the new Creature is half formed in thee, and thy Soul half

half ſaved: But when that Righteouſneſs is attained, that is, when it is brought down into thy Converſation, and thou liveſt righteouſly; then is Converſion finiſhed, the new Creature perfected, thy Salvation ſecured, and thou art made a bleſſed Man or Woman.

But thou wilt ſay, *What am I the nearer for all this, if I neither know how Righteous theſe Phariſees were, nor what a Righteouſneſs it is, wherein I muſt exceed them: Pray will you tell me how Righteous they were, and how much more Righteous I muſt be than they.*

Anſ. I will tell thee, but if I do I muſt have another promiſe from thee; and I profeſs, as in the preſence of the living God, If I thought that thou wouldeſt not grant it to me, I would not tell thee what thoſe things mean, but rather out of pity to thee, ſuffer thee to lie and dye in thy ignorance; tell me, wilt thou promiſe God and me,

me, that when I have told thee what the Righteouſneſs is that thou muſt ſeek, wilt thou by the help of God endeavour with all thy Soul and ſtrength to live that Righteous life this Doctrine will call for?

But ſtay (ſayeſt thou) *There is no haſte; tell me what it is firſt.*

Anſw. What doſt thou ſcruple? Art thou afraid I will deceive thee, and make it harder than it is? Reader, to put thee out of doubt from that, I proteſt ſolemnly, as I ſhall anſwer it before the Judge of quick and dead, before whom I am confident I muſt give an account of what I ſay or write, I will to the beſt of my underſtanding make it to be a Righteouſneſs, neither more nor leſs, than what Jeſus Chriſt hath made it; nor will I ſhew thee any thing but what I will give thee ſufficient Scripture-proof for; what ſayeſt thou now, wilt thou promiſe?

What doſt thou ſtick at Man? re-

remember what thou haſt confeſſed already: Didſt thou not confeſs juſt now, that thou didſt verily believe, that thou canſt not poſſibly be ſaved, except thou ſhalt become more Righteous than any Phariſee? and doſt thou now doubt whether it is beſt for thee to endeavour to exceed them? What, art thou reſolved to ſit down ſhort of Heaven? Ah ſinner, this is not ignorantly, but wilfully to deſtroy thy ſelf. Tell me then, wilt thou reſolve to live a more Righteous Life, or wilt thou not? thou dying Man or Woman, either reſolve, or read no more: I profeſs I did not write theſe lines to dally with thy Soul; if I had thought that all my Readers would have proved ſo obſtinate, I would not have loſt that little time I ſpent in writing what thou now art viewing, nor created thee the trouble of ſo much reading. Let God bear witneſs betwixt thy ſoul and mine, whether I am not more

deſi-

deſirous to have thee ſaved, than thou art to ſave thy ſelf.

The Sinners Reſolve.

Why then, I do reſolve, *as God ſhall help me, I will endeavour for the future, with all my Soul and Strength, to ſeek that Righteouſneſs (what-ever it be) you ſhall diſcover from the Word of God, to be his Will, and ſo my Duty.* Nay I further do reſolve, *That neither Fleſh nor Blood, nor any Sin, nor Luſt, or Worldly Intereſt whatever, ſhall hinder me from ſeeking a Portion in the Kingdom of my Saviour.* Bear Witneſs, O God, I am in as good earneſt as ever I was in all my Life.

Aye, ſay'ſt thou ſo? Let me then tell thee for thy comfort, Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.

But to keep thee faſt to thy Reſolution, that thou may'ſt neither give thy God nor me the ſlip, I do here adjure thee by thy God and Saviour, by thy immortal and precious

Soul,

ſoul, by Heaven, the Crown, and all the weights of glory that are there; yea, by every thing that is, or ſhould be dear and precious to thee, not to dare to draw back, and eat thy words again. And to tye thee yet up faſter to thy reſolved vow, read *Heb.* 10. *But the juſt ſhall live by Faith, and if any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* Oh that now it might be ſpoken of thee what follows in the next Verſe 39. *But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the ſaving of the Soul.* Mark ſinner; if thou draweſt back from ſo juſt, righteous, and holy reſolution thou haſt made, thou wilt fall into perdition; if thou holdeſt on, thou art paſſing forward to the ſalvation of thy ſoul; if hell doth not affright thee, let heaven perſwade thee to keep faſt to what thou haſt juſt now promiſed.

The second part of the Text lies in the discovery of two particulars.

1. Wherein did the Righteousnes of the Pharisees consist, which thou must resolve to exceed?

2. What is that Righteousnes of life that will set thee above the Pharisees, and put thee into a saving condition.

Of the first, What the Pharisees Righteousnes was.

1. The Pharisees was one of the strictest Sects, or the most precise Society of Men among the *Jews*; they were most nice observers of all the outward points of worship, according to the Law of *Moses*, and therefore had the esteem of their Countrymen for the most Religious People amongst them; I know thou wilt believe the Apostle *Paul*, if he tells thee so much, for he was one of them himself, before he left them, by being converted to Jesus Christ. Take his own words, *Act.* 26. 4, 5. *My manner*

ner of Life from my youth which was first among mine own Nation, at Jeruſalem know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning (if they would teſtifie) *that after the moſt ſtraighteſt ſect of our Religion, I lived a Phariſee.* Mark that well, the Phariſees (ſays *Paul*) were Religious, yea ſtraightly Religious, yea moſt ſtraightly Religious, that is, as to the outward part of the Jewiſh Religion, which conſiſted in being natural-born *Jews*, children of believing *Abraham*, admitted into the viſible Church by Circumciſion the eighth day, in being conſtant Preachers or Hearers in their Synagogues. But all this was not enough to ſpeak them righteous enough for the Kingdom of heaven, for remember, *Except thy Righteouſneſs exceed theirs, thou canſt in no caſe enter.* Chriſt hath ſaid it, and thou muſt believe it.

2. The Phariſees were right in their judgments in many or moſt of

the practical truths in Religion; they held that the only true God of *Iſrael* was to be worſhipped: That it was a moſt hainous ſin to thieve, to commit murther or adultery, or to forſwear a Man's ſelf, to lye, or bear falſe witneſs againſt a neighbour, or to be drunk, or to be a glutton. This muſt be all true of them, that they held theſe things as ſins, yea, and that they did forbear thoſe groſſer ſins. I prove it thus, 1. Becauſe Jeſus Chriſt permitted his own followers to hear them preach, yea and bid them do what they taught, *Matth.* 23. 1, 2. *Then ſpake Jeſus to the multitude, and to his Diſciples, ſaying, The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes ſeat* (the meaning is, that they were Preachers of the Commands of God delivered by Moſes) *all therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do, but do not after their works.* But ſecondly, I prove that they abſtained from groſſer ſins, at leaſt

leaſt to the outward act. 1. They abſtained from drunkenneſs, and gluttony, I gather from that blaſphemous reproach they caſt upon our bleſſed Saviour, in calling him a *Wine-biber and a Glutton*, which ſpeaks that they accounted them moſt diſgraceful ſins. 2. If they had not abominated the act of murder, adultery, perjury, with drunkenneſs, and the like, and ſo refrained from them in their lives, it were impoſſible they could ever have got that repute amongſt the *Jews* of being the moſt ſtrict religious ſort of People in all their Country. Who would ever have thought a ſociety of Drunkards, or Gluttons, or Whoremongers, or perjur'd perſons a ſtrict religious ſect? as the Apoſtle *Paul* confeſſeth they were reputed. From this that hath been ſaid, thou mayſt eaſily ſee, that thou mayſt be neither rogue nor whore, nor thief, nor drunkard, nor lyar, & yet be out of a ſtate of ſalvation,

as theſe Scribes and Phariſees were, though guilty of none of theſe ſins.

3. Theſe Phariſees were more righteous yet, for they were obſervers of the Sabbath-day, ſo far as to abſtain from all bodily labour, and to attend on the Worſhip of God, in Reading, Praying, Preaching, or expounding the Word of God: this was their Sabbath days employment in their Synagogues or Churches; and Chriſt permitted (as I ſhewed before) his own Diſciples to hear them, and to obſerve their Doctrin, and to do it; but as for doing any ſervile work on this day, they reckoned it a grievous ſin, yea if it were but dreſſing any Proviſion to eat, and therefore you have them quarrelling with the Diſciples of Chriſt for pulling ears of Corn on this day, and rubbing them in their hands to ſatisfie their hunger, *Luke* 6. 1. *And it came to paſs on the Sabbath, after the firſt, that Jeſus went through the Corn-fields, and his Diſci-*

Disciples plucked the ears of Corn, and did eat. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day? Mark Reader, See how strictly righteous they were! Sabbaths must be kept strictly kept; nothing must take up the Day with them, but reading, preaching, praying, expounding; no one must dress Meat on that Day, though to satisfie his Hunger; thou wilt say perhaps, Is it possible for Men to be more righteous? Nay, stay there; for I will shew thee presently, wherein thou must exceed them in all this, or in no case shalt enter into Heaven. 4. Yet farther, they were a sort of Men, that for the encouragement of Religion, and upholding the external form of worship, in paying Tythes (commanded by God in the Law of *Moses*) were precisely Just or Righteous; and Jesus Christ confesseth as much unto them, *Matth.* 23. 23. *Wo unto you*

Scribes, Phariſees, Hypocrites, for ye pay Tythe of Mint, and Aniſe, and Cummin. Theſe are the leaſt of herbs that were tythable, and it was diſputable by many of their Lawyers whether they were Tythable or not; yet the Phariſees for their part, left they might ſeem to rob God and his Church in the leaſt, reſolved to pay them, and Chriſt approves of them in that particular, by telling them, *Theſe things ye ought to have done*; but he adds withall by way of reproof, *Ye have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith*; and here their Righteouſneſs fell ſhort. So Reader, think thou mayeſt be an encourager of Religion in the place where thou art, mayeſt give freely and Liberally to the maintaining of a Godly Miniſter where thou liveſt, which the Lord Chriſt approves of, and commends; yet except thou doeſt ſomewhat more, this will not do, thou

thou mayeſt ſtill remain in a ſtate of perdition.

5. They were charitable to the poor; This likewiſe thou haſt acknowledged from the mouth of Chriſt, *Matth.* 6. 2. *When thou doſt thine alms, do not ſound a trumpet before thee as the Hypocrites do* (meaning the Phariſees) *in the Synagogues, and in the ſtreets, that they may have praiſe of man; verily, I ſay unto you, they have their reward*; that is, the value of many a penny, or ſhilling they threw into the poors box at Church, and many a piece of bread at their doors; many a penny or teſter the diſtributed by the highways and ſtreets, and many a beggar cryed out after them, God bleſs you Maſter, and they were all this while but Phariſees & curſed of God; for the Text is plain, that they ſhall never be ſaved, it ſays, *they have their reward already.* Oh therefore Reader, dare not to ſit down here,

unleſs thou intendeſt to bear them company to the gates of Hell; where thou mayeſt eaſily enter with them, but it is impoſſible ever to get out.

6. They were more righteous yet; for they were a praying People; and Chriſt confeſſeth as much, *Matth.* 6. 5. *And when thou prayeſt, thou ſhalt not be as the Hypocrites are* (meaning ſtill the Phariſees) *for they love to pray ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may be ſeen of men; verily I ſay unto you they have their reward.*

See here again, the Phariſees pray, love to pray, and yet Chriſt is peremptory, that they ſhall have no reward but that on earth, which ſpeaks him reſolved to deny them Heaven. Reader, ſtill conſider, thou mayeſt be one that prayeſt in thy Family, to ſtop the mouths of thy Friends and Servants, thy Godly Neighbours and Miniſter, that none of them may think

think or ſay, Thou art an ungodly Man or Woman; thou mayeſt come to Church, and clap thy hand or Hat before thy face, to be ſeen of Men to pray, yet thou mayeſt be no better than an Hypocritical Phariſee, out of a ſtate of Salvation.

7. Laſtly, The Phariſees believed the Reſurrection of the Dead, the bleſſed or miſerable ſtate of Souls after this Life (wherein they exceeded the Sadducees, who believed no Reſurrection) yea and hoped or were confident, if it fared well with any at the Reſurrection, it would with them.

Concerning their belief, in the great Article of the Chriſtian Faith, I mean the Reſurrection, thou needeſt no other proof of it, than their taking the Apoſtle *Paul*'s part againſt the Sadducees (*Acts* 23. 6, 7, 8.) ſays *Paul, I am a Phariſee, the ſon of a Phariſee, of the hope, and Reſurrection of the Dead, I am called in Queſtion.*

Object. *But was* Paul *a Phariſee? How could* Paul *then be ſaved, if no Phariſees are ſaved?*

Anſw. Paul calls himſelf a Phariſee, becauſe he was one, and his father was ſuch an one, till he was converted to Chriſt.

Obj. But ſays he, *I am ſtill ſuch an one.*

Anſw. True, he was ſo, but not abſolutely in all parts; for he preached Chriſt, whom the Phariſees crucified. But in this ſingle point he kept ſtill a Phariſee, in Holding the Reſurrection of the Dead, which the Sadducees denied, and therefore the Phariſees ſtrike in with *Paul* againſt them, ſaying, Verſe 9. *We find no evil in this man; but if a Spirit or Angel hath ſpoken to him, let us not fight againſt God.* Who would but think that ſuch Men as theſe were good?

1. How tender do they ſeem to be in oppoſing God in any Revelation

on of his will and mind!

2. They take an Apoſtles part for teaching the true doctrine of the Reſurrection.

3. They expreſs much Zeal in oppoſing the Sadducees for their Hereſie.

4. They make a clear profeſſion of their faith in the point of Angels, Spirits, and the Reſurrection, and conſequently of the immortality of their Souls, and their Hope of a bleſſedneſs after this Life; yet ſtill remember they were Phariſees; and Chriſt hath ſaid it, *Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye can in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of God.*

Oh Reader, take warning, and do not dare to venture thy Eternal Life upon ſuch a ſhallow, ſandy righteouſneſs as the Phariſees did.

Thus have I finiſhed the firſt particular, in ſhewing thee what the righteouſneſs

teouſneſs of the Phariſees was. Now, Reader, pull up thy ſpirits, and gird up thy loins like a Man; I will ſhew thee now the Mark that thou muſt ſhoot at, the Garland thou muſt run for, and the Crown thou muſt fight for; the righteouſneſs that will bear thee up above the clouds, and ſet thee ſafe in the Kingdom of Heaven, among the ſpirits of juſt Men made perfect, if thou reſolveſt to ſeek after it, which through the grace of God thou may'ſt aſſuredly attain to.

Second

SECOND PART.

Shewing, What is the Righteouſneſs of the Saints, that exceeds that of the Phariſees.

1. THe Phariſees, as righteous as they were, did not acknowledge Jeſus Chriſt, nor entertain him as the Son of God, and the Saviour of the World: Now if thou wilt acknowledge him as all this, and anſwerably reſolve to believe in him, rely upon him for pardon and ſtrength againſt ſin; if thou wilt love him above thy Father, or Mother, Son, Daughter, Houſe, Land, Living, above thy ſins and luſts, and wilt readily part with them all at his Command, thou haſt done ſomething the Phariſees never did; thy Righteouſneſs ſhall be more than theirs, and thou ſhalt enter into Heaven, when they ſhall be ſhut down into Hell.

2. The

2. The *Phariſees* believed it a ſin to commit Murder, but they did not count it Murder to be Angry with their Brethren or Neighbours without a cauſe, and to call them Fools or *Racha.* Now Reader, if thou wilt ſtrive and ſtruggle all revenge and unlawful paſſion out of thy heart, thou art more righteous than ever the Phariſees were. Reader, ſee thou to it, it muſt be done, without thou wilt be content to be no more righteous than the *Phariſees* were; do not diſpute it, Chriſt will have it ſo: *Matt* 5. 22. *I ſay unto you; that whoſoever is angry with his brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of Judgment; and whoſoever ſhall ſay, Thou Fool, ſhall be in danger of Hell fire.* If thou wilt have it more clear, conſider 1 *Joh.* 3. 15. *Whoſoever hateth his brother, is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath Eternal Life abiding in him.* As thou likeſt the caſting

into

into Hell-fire, or being accounted a Murderer in the Judgment of God, of being void of Eternal Life, give way hereafter to thy proud, peeviſh, revengeful, paſſionate Nature.

3. The Righteouſneſs of the *Phariſees* condemned the *act* of Adultery to be a ſin, but they did not think that a laſcivious Look, and luſtful deſire of the heart after a Woman was a ſin. Now Reader, if thou wilt reſolve to conquer the deſires of thy luſtful Eyes and Heart, thou haſt attained a Righteouſneſs the *Phariſees* never had; ſtick not at it, Sinner; this Command (as the whole Yoak of Chriſt) is eaſie, and may be born: Chriſt will have it, and thou muſt do it, if thou reſolveſt to exceed the *Phariſees*: *Mat.* 5. 28. *I ſay unto you* (ſays Chriſt) *whoſoever looketh on a Woman to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery with her in his heart.* Now think, if thou

wilt

wilt ſtill give way to thy luſtful Eyes and Heart, know this, that the Adulterer God will judge, and thou may'ſt be ſuch, though thou never doſt commit the Act.

4. The *Phariſees* thought it only a ſin to *forſwear* themſelves; but the Command of Chriſt is, *Swear not at all*, Mat. 5. 34. except it be in Caſes that are true, certain, and certainly known, lawful, poſſible, and weighty, wherein the Glory of God, and the welfare of thy Neighbour is conſiderably concerned, but ordinarily before a Magiſtrate, and then an Oath is lawful. This I muſt prove, becauſe it is ſo ſtifly denyed by ſome in this Age, inconſiderately enough. The only Objection which they have, is founded on that of our Lord Chriſt, *Mat.* 5. 34. *But I ſay unto you, ſwear not at all*; which ſaying, I confeſs, if broken off from the ſcope of Chriſt in his whole Diſcourſe, ſeems to intimate ſo much,

that

that it was not only the corrupt profane uſe of Oaths that he condemneth, but that he intended an utter abolition of the uſe of all, how-ever circumſtantiated.

Anſw. 2. I grant that from this Text, not only perjury, but that ſwearing is forbidden.

2. I farther grant that all manner of ſwearing by any creature is expreſly forbidden, as Heaven, Earth, *Jeruſalem*, by thy head; and that in no caſe whatever it is lawful to uſe them; and the Lord Chriſt gives you the reaſon why.

But Thirdly, I deny, that from this Text may be proved, that it is unlawful to ſwear by God himſelf before a Magiſtrate, or in caſes above expreſſed; My reaſons are theſe:

1. Becauſe the Lord Chriſt doth not mention that oath which was only lawful amongſt the *Jews*, but takes up in chiding them for perjury in general, and for oaths by creatures in par-

particular, which *Hierom* noted long ſince. *Conſidero (inquit) quod hic Salvator non per Deum jurare prohibuerit, ſed per Cœlum, per terram, &c.*

2. Becauſe the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus did conſtitute the lawfulneſs of ſwearing by his Name, *Deut.* 6. 13. and 10. 20. *Thou ſhalt ſwear by the Name of God*, *Exod.* 22. 1. *The Oath of Jehovah ſhall be between you.* Now is it probable that the Son ſhould make that unlawful, which the Father made lawful? Is not this to eſtabliſh the old *Manichean* Hereſie, that taught that the God of the Old Teſtament, and the God of the New, were as contrary as light and darkneſs, and their work was to contradict each other? if any reply, that it is a granted caſe, that Chriſt aboliſhed the Ceremonial Law, that under the Moſaical diſpenſation was in force at the appointment of his Father; and

why

why may he not then aboliſh this?

I anſwer, But then it muſt be well proved that an oath was a ceremony, and then I pray tell me, what was it a Type of? But ſecondly, I have far more ground to think it one of the Judicial Laws, as being highly ſubſervient to put the other Laws in execution, which in many caſes might have been ſuſpended, or not with ſo clear juſtice executed, without an Oath to render the teſtimony evident.

3. Becauſe he expreſly ſays of himſelf, *I came not to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfil it*; and can you perſwade your ſelf, that he can ſay he will not, & yet do it? was not there once a Law for ſwearing? have I not proved it? But can Chriſt be ſaid to fulfil that Law by an utter aboliſhing of it? he being the Subſtance, came in the room of all the Ceremonies, which were ſhadows; but prove that an Oath is a ſhadow, and I have done.

4. I

4. I argue, *à genere*, from the nature of an Oath it ſelf, (which if well underſtood) it is very unlikely that the Son of God ſhould take away the uſe of it. *An Oath is an appeal to God, wherein he is beſeeched, as the only ſearcher of hearts, that he would bear teſtimony to the truth, and would puniſh the ſwearer, if he know him to bear a falſe teſtimony*: but that all ſuch appeals to God ſhould be prohibited and condemned by Chriſt, can hardly be affirmed without blaſphemy.

5. Let me reaſon from the end and uſe of an Oath, which will farther diſcover it was never the intent of Chriſt utterly to aboliſh all oaths. 1. An Oath then is that whereby Men give to God the praiſe of his higheſt Wiſdom, that ſees into the Secrets of their hearts, and ſees into every corner of them, what truth or falſhood lodgeth there. 2. And it yields him the Glory of his Omnipotency, where-

whereby it is acknowledged, he is able to puniſh the Perjured. 3. It Honours his Juſtice and Mercy, becauſe thereby Men acknowledge that he will infallibly defend Truth, and be a Revenger of Falſhood. Laſtly, it is the bond of Politick Order, and Humane Societies, neither of which can long continue without Faithfulneſs and Truth, nor could there be that diſpatch of Strifes and Controverſies, *Exod.* 22. *Heb.* 11. 6. To condemn therefore every Oath, ſeems to detract from God's Glory, and to deſtroy Humane Society; and we may be ſure the Son of God would neither be the Author of one nor of the other.

6. Can it be thought without madneſs, that Chriſt would condemn the commended Examples of the Saints in Scripture? not only of the Patriarchs, but alſo of the Apoſtles, yea and of God himſelf, their Solemn Oaths ſo frequently recorded,

as

as ſigns of their great Zeal and Devotion, that it were endleſs to enumerate them; ſee that of *Paul*, Gal. 20. *Before God I lie not.* And ſo 2 *Cor.* 12. 19.

7. I might add as farther proof, that the Prophets very often foretold, that God by his new Church under the reign of the Meſſiah, ſhould be honoured by the Oath of his People, as *Iſa.* 65. 16. *He that ſweareth in the Earth, ſhall ſwear by the God of Truth.* Iſa. 19. 15. *In that day ſhall five Cities in the Land of Ægypt, ſpeak the Language of Canaan, and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.* And can it yet be imagined, that when Jeſus Chriſt gave birth to all other Prophecies, he ſhould render this abortive, and render that unlawful, which was foretold to be one of the Glories of his Kingdom?

But to conclude Reader, after all that hath been ſaid, this is plain, that

al

all manner of Oaths, except in the aforesaid Cases, are unquestionably sinful, and must be refrained, if thou intendest to excel the *Pharisees*; which is certain, that thou must, or forgo all thy hopes in Heaven.

5. The *Pharisees* paid Tythe most justly for the maintaining the Outward Form of Service to God, but in their more ordinary Civil matters they were most Unconscionable, Unjust, and Fraudulent; witness the poor Widows Houses they devoured, and to hide the matter from the World, they made long Prayers. But if thou wouldest be more Righteous than they, let thy Purse be open for the promoting the Service of thy God; but seek not to repair thy Layings out, by unjust oppressive cozening ways of Trading; this is to Rob Churches, to build Hospitals, or to pick thy Customers Pocket to make an Oblation to God, or to steal a Sheep to make

make a Sacrifice; be not ſuch an one, leſt God ſend thee to Hell for thine Offering.

6. The *Phariſees* (as thou haſt heard) were ſtrict Obſervers of Sabbaths: ſo that if thou Conſcientiouſly wilt endeavour to live over in the Week-days, what thou learneſt of God on the Sabbath-day, thy Righteouſneſs excels theirs.

7. They gave Alms, but with an intent to be ſeen, and praiſed of Men: Give thou thine Alms, but out of an unfeigned Love to God, and thy needy Brethren, and ſtill thy Righteouſneſs is greater.

8. They believed the Immortality of the Soul, and the Reſurrection of the Dead, but yet their earthly, ſenſual Living, ſpake as if they underſtood no higher Life than this, that is meerly Mortal. But if thou wilt believe thy Soul ſhall not dye, and therefore always live here on Earth, as if thou wert upon the Borders of Eternity,

ternity, expecting a departure into another World, in all Temperance, Juſtice, Mercy, Faithfulneſs; there is then as much difference betwixt thy Righteouſneſs and theirs, as betwixt the clear Sun, or the brighteſt Star, and a Clod of Clay or Dirt.

9. Laſtly, This rotten frame of external Righteouſneſs, they thought ſufficient to anſwer the ſevereſt Law of God, and to bring them off acquitted, and fully juſtified at the final Judgment; they dreamed not of a Saviour's Bloud, or any neceſſity for the bloudy Sacrifice of the Son of God for the Expiation of Sins. But if, ſinner, thou wilt reſolve for thy part to rowl thy faith, and all the garments of thy inward Righteouſneſs in the bloud of Chriſt, and never hope to find acceptance for the moſt precious life of faith and holineſs that can be lived by thee, but by the Mediation of a Saviour, then haſt thou hit the Mark, and anſwered

fully the expectations of thy Saviours call, who called thee to a righteouſneſs above the Phariſees; here it is, and here thou muſt reſolve to live and dye.

And now I have ſhewed thee what a Man or Woman thou mayeſt, and muſt be, if ever thou hopeſt to be ſaved; remember now the Vow thou madeſt to God. Before I ſhewed thee what that Righteouſneſs is that thou muſt ſeek; and I now claim thy promiſe, and challenge thee on thy Vow to tell me what thy purpoſe is to do in theſe particulars that I ſhall ask thee.

Art thou reſolved from thy Soul to love the Lord Jeſus with all thy heart and ſtrength? Wilt thou reckon neither ſin, nor luſt, nor life dear to part with for him? and in a way of obedience wilt thou truſt to him for his free remitting all thy ſins? Wilt thou endeavour to live a more ſtrict life, & more ſpiritual than ever Phariſee did?

Wilt

Wilt thou not only account of Murder to be a ſin, but wilt thou abhor all unlawful anger againſt thy Brother, or the calling of him Fool without a cauſe, and wilt thou think ſo doing a degree of Murder? Wilt thou condemn Adultery, not only in the act, but likewiſe in the eye, and heart; and be rather willing to pull out thy right eye, than wound thy conſcience and offend thy God? wilt thou keep the Sabbath, not only in the Letter, but in the Spirit, and in Truth.

In a word, wilt thou reſolve to pray unto thy God, and bring thy Heart in to thy Prayers? wilt thou conſcientiouſly endeavour in thy calling to maintain thy ſelf and family, & to be able to relieve thy poor brother by thy charity; and wilt thou do both out of pure love to God, and thy Neighbour, and not for the love of praiſe from Men? wilt thou believe the Immortality of thy Soul, the Re-

ſurrection of the Dead, and the bleſſedneſs of thoſe that die in the Lord? and wilt thou endeavour a fellowſhip in that Reſurrection by walking with God, and living a holy, innocent, humble, chaſt, ſober, heavenly, believing life? What ſayeſt thou Man? What amazed?

Sin. *Ah I cannot, I dare not, I will not promiſe any ſuch thing: Here is a task indeed, enough to break any Man's heart, and to make me live miſerably all my days; I would your Book had been burnt, before it came to my hands, or within my doors: What, no hopes of entring Heaven without ſuch a Righteous life? It is better you were hanged, and the whole generation of ſuch Preachers as you are.*

Anſw. But ſinner, Ah ſinner, why ſo impatient? I am not thine enemy, I tell thee the truth, *I ſpeak the truth in Chriſt, I lie not*; Chriſt hath ſaid it, and I dare ſay it again, *Except thy*

thy Righteouſneſs exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, thou canſt in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: If this ſingle Text is not a witneſs ſufficient, thou ſhalt have it confirmed by the mouths of one or two more: read *Heb.* 12. 14. *Follow peace and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* So 1 *John* iii. 2, 3. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but he that hath this hope purifieth himſelf as he is pure.* I could add an hundred Scriptures more, but here are witneſſes enough to arraign and condemn thee: What ſayeſt thou now? what, wilt thou yet wiſh me hanged, for telling nothing but what Chriſt and *Paul* and *John* had told thee? No, no, thou wert but in a paſſion, I do freely forgive thee: But oh that my hanging could keep thee from damning: how far better that I were hanged, and a hundred ſuch Preach-

ers as I am, ſo we could expiate thy ſins, and prevent the ruine of thy Soul and Body for ever. Were I tyed to a Gibbet, I ſhould be quickly out of my pain, but if thou goeſt to Hell, thou wilt never be out of thine: I ſhould be quickly dead, but thou wilt never dye as to thy torment. Sinner believe me, nothing but love to thy precious Soul makes me deal ſo plainly with thee.

Sin. *But how can I perſwade my ſelf you love me, when you would put ſuch a yoke of Righteouſneſs upon my neck, that I nor my Father could never bear?*

Anſw. It makes no matter whether thou thinkeſt I love thee or not; if I do not, I am ſure thou wilt confeſs that Jeſus did: why Man! it is not I, but he that doth thus endeavour to put this holy Yoke upon thy Neck, and doth intreat thee to wear it for his ſake, *Matth.* 11. 29, 30. *Take my yoak upon you, and learn of me,*

for

for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you ſhall have reſt to your Souls; for my yoak is eaſie and my burthen is light. And what is this yoke, but the holy, righteous nature, and life, which I have been all this while explaining to thee?

But ſayeſt thou, *Do I in conſcience think that the command of Chriſt may be thus obeyed, and ſuch a righteous life lived?*

Anſw. Yea, in my very conſcience I do think it, that both this life may, and is lived by thouſands, yea by all that are in a preſent ſtate of ſalvation; nay, verily think that all the commands of Chriſt may, and are by all ſound Chriſtians obey'd (excepting ſome particular acts that with them are not ordinary) yea and with ſuch an obedience, that *quoad ſpeciem*, though not *quoad gradum*, is perfect; that is, their love, fear or faith to God and Chriſt, have the true genuine nature of theſe

graces, and ſuch as the Command calls for; yet I confeſs none loves or fears, or believes ſo much, but there might be ſeveral cubits added to the ſtature of theſe graces: but Reader, it is not my deſire to trouble thy head with ſpeculations, I have got unto thy heart, and there I will keep. If thou wilt then have thy queſtion anſwered of Chriſt in thy life, look 1 *John* 5. 2, 3. *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God* (or herein it conſiſteth) *that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous.* See how the Apoſtle tells thee, they may not only be obeyed, but that to them that love God, they are not grievous; if thou wilt neither believe Chriſt, nor his Apoſtles, I deſpair of finding credit with thee; but I will not cheriſh ſo horrid an opinion of thee, I know thou believeſt them both: methinks I ſee thy heart relenting, and about to yield the cauſe; Doth not thy

thy heat begin to cool, and thy anger to me abate? Doſt thou not begin to ſee how much thou haſt been deceived in the matters of thy Soul, and to tremble to think how many of thy Neighbours have been deceived with thee? Art thou not ready to ſay to me, as King *Agrippa* once did to Paul, *Thou haſt almoſt perſwaded me to be a Chriſtian?* Me-thinks I ſee thee kiſs the Book, be-dew it with thy tears, and hear thee bleſs God that directed it to thee, or thank the friend that put it into thy hand.

Tell me then, What is thy reſolution? I cannot, muſt not let thee go, I have thy promiſe already, and God will have the performance, or will have thy Life; I have already told thee wherein a greater, better, and far more noble righteouſneſs conſiſts, than ever the Phariſees underſtood, I expect thy anſwer.

Sinner. *Oh Sir, Pray have me ex-*

cuſed, I am convinced, there is truth in what you ſay, but I have ſuch a Trade, ſuch a Family to look after, ſuch company and ways I have been many years ingaged in, I can have neither time to read, or pray, or faſt, to think of God, or Chriſt, or Heaven, or Hell, or Death, or Judgment, or any thing elſe; my pride, my paſſion is ſo ſtrong, and I ſo uſed to them, I cannot maſter them; If I lye not, nor over-reach my brother, I cannot trade, and ſo I cannot live; though I have a good mind to what you ſay, and am convinced it is my duty, yet I do not think for my part, I ſhall ever attain to live, no not ſo righteouſly as the Phariſees did.

Anſw. Is this thy laſt, and utmoſt reſolution? Will no reaſon nor Scripture prevail with thee? Can neither Man nor God perſwade thee? then no more ſinner, but expect thy doom, theſe excuſes ſhall not, muſt not ſerve thy turn; read it in the laſt

clauſe

clauſe of my Text, *Thou ſhalt in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Canſt thou read ſo ſad a ſentence and find no tear to drop, nor groan to fetch? The poor Rogue at the Bar is more tender of his life, and afraid of the Gallows, than thou art of thy Soul, or Hell; What, is thy heart a rock, or thy eyes a flint? Art thou paſt all ſenſe or feeling? *Thou ſhalt not enter into Heaven,* is that nothing? But perhaps thou doſt not underſtand what ſhutting out of Heaven means; leſt thy ignorance ſhould undo thee, I will inſtruct thee.

Third

THIRD PART.

The third part of my Text, ſhewing the miſery of being ſhut out of Heaven, in three particulars.

1. TO be ſhut out of Heaven means all this, Thou ſhalt not ſee thy God in Heaven, nor behold his glory; thou ſhalt neither love him, nor be beloved of him; thou ſhalt not ſee, nor live with Jeſus Chriſt, the beſt friend that ever thou hadſt, thou ſhalt never ſee, nor underſtand the bleſſedneſs of thoſe Angel-ſpirits that be there, nor enjoy the fellowſhip of the Saints on high; thou ſhalt never taſte of the Rivers of Pleaſure that run out of the Throne of the Lamb, nor behold the ſweet light that ſtreams in floods from his countenance; thou ſhalt never hear him call thee bleſſed; or pronounce thee juſt, nor bid thee welcome to the

the joy of thy Maſter.

Piſh, ſaiſt thou, *And is this all? it is even as good as nothing, thou never heardeſt, or ſaweſt, or taſtedſt or didſt enjoy any ſuch things as theſe on earth, and yet thou ſayeſt thou livedſt happily enough without them; thou ever foundeſt more pleaſure in an Alehouſe than in a Church, and admiredſt the melody of a wanton laſcivious Song, above the harmony of a Pſalm: a cup of Wine, and a good Feaſt at a Tavern, hath ever been delicious, more delicious to thee, than the bleſſed Sacrament of the body and blood of Chriſt: yea the ſmiles of a wanton Harlot have been more indearing than the love and kindneſs of a tender Saviour; if the loſs of Heaven be no more than the loſs of ſeeing or enjoying God, Chriſt, Angels, Saints, in a glorious union of the ſpirit, fare them well all, give me but the full ſtreams of my ſinful pleaſures, though I ſwim in them to Hell.*

Anſw.

Anſw. But ſtay ſinner, ſure thou art not in good earneſt, think again, thou dareſt not ſay ſo once more, I have better hopes of thee than ſo, thou art ſure not ſo far gone, certainly thou haſt ſome reaſon left, the light of thy Conſcience is not quite put out, ſurely thou art no Beaſt, nor Devil.

Sinner. *Well, it is no matter what I am, I am reſolved to hazard all for this beloved Gold, theſe pleaſant Cups and Diſhes, of Wines, Meats, and ſenſual pleaſures; if I ſhould not Say ſo, I am reſolved to Do ſo, for this ſinful life I will not part with, though I loſe an Hundred Kingdoms of Heaven, and as many Crowns as there are ſtars, and as rich a glory as God himſelf can pretend to give me: Give me to live on Earth in ſin, and what care I for God or Heaven, and all his happineſs?*

Anſw. Me-thinks yet ſinner, I cannot believe thee; this is but a bravado,

do, thou dareſt not ſay ſo in cold blood, no nor if thou wert on thy Death-bed; I never heard a Rogue at a Gallows ſay ſo, though while he was at liberty, he was perhaps as deſperate a wretch as thy ſelf.

If yet thou thinkeſt thou dareſt both Say and Do ſo, hear me then once more; thou haſt not heard the worſt, at leaſt not all that *ſhutting out of Heaven* implies; it ſignifies thus much more.

2. If thou art ſhut out of Heaven, thou muſt be ſhut out of Earth too; the Paradiſe above ſhall not only be kept againſt thee with a Flaming Sword, but thou ſhalt loſe the happineſs of curſed *Cain*, of being a Vagabond upon the Earth.

Sinner, the time is coming, and then will be, that all thy Gold and Silver, with rich Apparel, with all thy Houſes, Lands, and Livings, with all thy Meats & Drinks, thou muſt leave behind thee, to be devoured by the mercileſs

merciles flames that ſhall conſume the World; what wilt thou get then to delight thy liquoriſh palate, or to quench thy drunken thirſt, or to cover thy rotten carkaſs; or to ſatisfie thy beaſtly unſatisfied luſt? I pray thee Reader think, am I telling thee a fable? art thou a dying Man or Woman? Is not thy life moſt, or much of it ſpent already? how often more doſt thou think will the Clock ſtrike round, before it ſtrikes the hour that thou muſt dye? art thou ſure of the morrow? doth not the bell hang in thy Pariſh-ſteeple that muſt towl thy knell? doth not thy Coffin and thy Grave ſtare thee in the Face, and tell thee we muſt ſhortly have thy Body? and doſt not thou then know for certain, that all the fuel of thy ſenſual pleaſures, and ſo the pleaſures themſelves, muſt be left behind?

What ſayeſt thou now Reader? how doſt thou like ſhutting out of hea-

heaven, when thou muſt not only loſe the delights there, but all that are upon the Earth?

What, is thy mind yet changed? ſpeak Man, thou haſt time yet given thee to make thy choice; wilt thou endeavour to be more righteous than the Phariſees, or ſit down content to be ſhut out of Heaven? Thou fooliſh ſinner, why doſt thou delay thy anſwer, what difficulty can there be in the queſtion that I ask thee? Heaven thou knoweſt, and righteouſneſs thou knoweſt, for I have told thee what they mean already: Ah that Man's heart ſhould be ſo ſottiſh to make it a doubtful caſe, whether it is better to chuſe Heaven with righteouſneſs, or Hell with wickedneſs!

Methinks I hear thee begin to cry out, Good Lord, what a ſtraight hath this Book driven me to! I did not think theſe fooliſh Preachers had half ſo much reaſon on their ſides; I begin now to think it is hard to hear them,

them, or to read them, without being of their minds; though I care not much for Heaven, yet I am loth to loſe Heaven and Earth together. What ſhall I do? there is nothing can keep me out of Heaven but an unrighteous wicked life; but how ſhall I leave my ſin? I know not; I am not uſed to read and pray, and repent in tears, and I care not to begin; but I am uſed to ſwear and lie, and drink and whore, and them I cannot leave; but if I do not, I cannot enter into Heaven; what ſhall I do? Oh that I may die like a Beaſt, and lye in a benummed ſtate of Death for ever, free from all ſenſe or feeling of any joy, ſo I might live on Earth but as I liſt! Oh my dear works of darkneſs, I do ſo love you, that I could be willing to be a Dog, or any other Beaſt at Death, ſo I might but have your company while I live!

Reply, Ah Fool, Fool, Fool! What Devil hath been the Prieſt, to eſpouſe

eſpouſe thee ſo nearly to thy filthy, ſtinking, rotten ſinful life, that neither Chriſt nor his Miniſters can perſwade thee to divorce? Thou ſenſeleſs ſinner, haſt thou not too juſtly provoked thy Maker to repent that he made thee a Man? what, content to dye like a Beaſt, and loſe the glorious priviledge of an Immortal Life, for a baſe filthy ſin? how much pity is it that ever thou wert Man or Woman, and not rather a dog or toad? thou art a diſgrace to the humane nature; but thou wretched deſperate ſinner, I tell thee thou ſhalt not have thy wiſh, becauſe thou art ſo unwilling to live like a Son or Daughter of God on Earth, thou ſhalt not have ſo much happineſs as to lie down in the Grave like a Dog, thou ſhalt aſſuredly go to Hell, and ſo to torment, therefore ſhutting out of Heaven ſpeaks more ſadneſs than I have acquainted Thee with.

3. Laſtly, Conſider this, if thou wilt

wilt not reſolve to live more righteouſly than ever any Phariſee did. Aſſure thy ſelf, that Jeſus Chriſt that ſhuts thee out of Heaven, ſhall ſhut thee in Hell; that Tongue that pronounceth the Righteous bleſſed, ſhall pronounce Thee curſed, and he that bids them enter into the Joy of their Maſter, ſhall command thee to deſcend into Torments with the Devils, there ſhalt thou receive the ſtroak of his Iron Rod, that ſhall daſh thee in pieces, and bear the ſtroaks of his revengeful arm for thy abuſing of his tender & long-ſuffering mercy. There ſhalt thou feel the worryings of an enraged Conſcience, and ſuffer the tortures of devouring flames, and this for ever and ever.

Reader, If thou art obſtinate, deceive not thy ſelf; God will not be mocked, and in his puniſhing thee for ſin, he will not ſeem to be in jeſt; for as the Lord liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth, there is not a tittle of what

I ſay, but what is contained in thy Bible; If I ſhew it thee to be there, thou wilt not ſure queſtion whether it be true: Read then, and let thine own eyes bear witneſs, *Matth.* 25. 41. *Then ſhall he ſay unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels,* Mark 9. 47. *And if thine eye offend thee,* that is, thy ſin, as dear as thy eye, hinder thee in the way to Heaven, pluck it out, (that is, caſt it away, and leave that ſin.) *It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye,* (yea with no eye) *than having two eyes to be caſt into Hell-fire, where the Worm dyeth not, and the Fire is not quenched,* Rev. 21. 8. *But the fearful* (that is, ſuch as fear to part with ſin, and life, and all for Chriſt) *and unbelieving, and abominable, and Murderers and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters* (ſuch are covetous Men) *and all lyars,*

ars, ſhall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, this is the Second Death, Rev. 20. 10. *And the Devil that deceived them, was caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where the Beaſt and the falſe Prophets are, and ſhall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever.*

2 Theſſ. 1. 7, 8. *When the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* Now thou haſt read all theſe Texts, I cannot think thou wilt unſay them all, thou haſt the witneſs both of *John* and *Paul*, and Chriſt himſelf; I am ſure their teſtimony will paſs in the Court of Heaven, and there it is, and only there, that thou muſt take thy trial,

trial, receive thy ſentence, and be ſent to this Dreadful Puniſhment; what haſt thou more to ſay?

The Sinners laſt Refuge.

I have read, (ſayeſt thou) That there is no ſalvation without I live an exceeding righteous life; it is plain in Scripture, I cannot deny it; and ſurely my drunkenneſs, my ſwearing, lying, whoring, neglect of praying, reading, do not ſpeak me an exceeding Righteous man; What ſhall I do? ſhall I think with my ſelf in ſo miſerable eſtate, that if I dye before I change my life, I muſt go to Hell? Oh I dare not; what then? to leave my ſins I will not; but how then? ſhall I keep them? if I do, the Scripture is plain, I cannot go to Heaven; truly I know not what to ſay; but perhaps there may be ſome way to Heaven that the Scripture doth not tell us of, I reſolve to venture it at leaſt, and I know I ſhall

ſhall have many to bear me company, and thus I will ſatisfie my ſelf, and continue as I am.

Anſw. A poor ſhift! Thou hopeſt God will find a way to ſave thee, that he hath not revealed; that is, in plain Engliſh thus, thou hopeſt that God hath told thee by Jeſus Chriſt, that except thou art more Righteous than the Phariſees, thou canſt not be ſaved, yet he intendeth the quite contrary, and will ſave thee and others, though thou liveſt more wickedly than ever the Phariſees did: What is this but to put God the Father and Jeſus Chriſt at variance, and make them contradict each other? yea to think ſo impudently of God, that he ſent his only Son into the World to deceive and cheat it in a company of untruths, as this would be one, if it ſhould ever be, as thou art bold to hope.

But I have ſomewhat in my Text ſtill

ſtill behind, that will ſpoil thy hopes and convince thee of this wicked imagination; ſays my Text (*Ye ſhall in no caſe enter*) mark that (*in no caſe*) what do thoſe three words mean? Do they not plainly ſignifie that God hath ſhut up all other ways to Heaven, or that there are no means left by which thou canſt poſſibly ſcape the miſery of the damned, but only this of becoming righteous?

1. Perhaps thou thinkeſt to hide thy ſelf in the Grave, and to lurk cloſe in the corner of that dark room. But fool, never think on it, for the doors of thoſe Chambers of Death ſhall break open, the Trumpet ſhall ſound, and thou amongſt the reſt ſhalt ariſe, and ſtand up before Him.

2. Perhaps thou conceiveſt a way to eſcape by crying for mercy. Ah ſinner, that will not do neither, for then it will be too late, there is no

room for repentance, nor for mercy, when thou haſt once left this Earth.

3. What, doſt thou think to plead the blood of Chriſt? It will be anſwered by Chriſt that ſhed it, that he ſhed it only for the penitent, believing, godly ſinner, and thou art none of thoſe.

4. Doſt thou think then to fly from the Juſtice of God the Son, to the mercy of God the Father? and if thou ſhouldeſt, I tell thee, he would ſend thee back again unto Chriſt his Son, and withal acquaint thee, that he hath committed all Judgment to his Son, and is reſolved to ſpare none that his Child *Jeſus* will not ſave; and thou art ſure already of this, that Chriſt his Son will ſave none but ſuch whoſe righteouſneſs hath exceeded that of the Phariſees. Read my Text, hath he not there ſaid it? and canſt thou think that upon his Judgment-ſeat he will deny this Sermon,

or

or this part of it that he preached upon the earth? Shall ſo great a Judge as Chriſt make a Law, and publiſh it on the Earth, and then upon the Bench deny he ever ſaid ſo, or then repent it? no, no, Sinner, it is impoſſible he ſhould deny himſelf, or his word.

Now Reader, if thou be a Man or Woman whoſe heart and life is not yet changed, if thou haſt not a righteouſneſs above the Phariſees, in what a ſad caſe doſt thou ſee thy ſelf! or at leaſt thou may'ſt, if thou wert not blind; whither canſt thou turn thy ſelf, but thou muſt ſee Hell and Damnation before thee, and ready to devour thee?

Sinner. *Oh Sir, What ſhall I do to be ſaved?*

I tell thee how? there is one way left thee to ſalvation, and but one, and my Text hath told it, Endeavour to be exceeding righteous in thy life, and that is the way to life; let thy

love and faith to God and Chriſt Jeſus, let thy ſincere Obedience to all his commands to the utmoſt that thou art able, let thy thoughts, thy words, thy Prayer, thy Alms, ſpeak thee a more righteous Man or Woman than the ſtricteſt Scribe and Phariſee that ever breathed upon the Earth; this, this is the way to Heaven. If after all this thou art reſolved to continue as thou art, thy bloud be on thine own head, I have diſcharged my duty.

Sinner. *Lord have mercy upon me! What a blind wretch have I been, thus to miſtake my way! and think I have been going to Heaven, when I now ſee plainly I am in the broad Road to Hell! Well, I thank God I am not yet ſwallowed up of the Gulph, Mercy hath hitherto kept me out; and I am reſolved to abuſe long-ſuffering mercy not an hour longer. It is but leaving my drunken companions, and my filthy Harlots, and who would not*

leave

leave them to gain the love of God, and my bleſſed Saviour? Ay but leaving my lying, ſwearing, and turning my curſes into prayers and bleſſings; and what harm is there in prayers and bleſſings, I am ſure they will pleaſe my God better, and trouble my conſcience leſs. It is but loving my neighbour as my ſelf, but eſpecially my God and Saviour, with all my heart, ſoul and ſtrength; and to account of gold and ſilver, friends, credit, and my ſins, as dung and droſs, in a compare to them; and I am ſure, that they are better than them all, and ſo they deſerve as much and more of love from me: It is but to pray, praiſe and thank them for the offer of Eternal Life, and to rely upon the blood of Jeſus for pardon and acceptance, and I am ſure that Jeſus Chriſt will prove my faſteſt friend.

Well, my reſolution is this, *God, Men, and Angels, ſhall ſee I am another Man; Heaven ſhall ſee me more*

on my Knees in my Cloſet: it ſhall be my next work when I have read out this Book, my Family ſhall ſee and hear me more in reading, and praying; I and my Houſe ſhall ſerve the Lord, *and all my Neighbours ſhall ſee me walk in thoſe very ways, that I have formerly moſt prophanely Laughed and Scoffed at. I know it will be my turn now to be ſcorned, and derided by others, yea ſome of my familiar drunken Companions; but what care I? Chriſt ſuffered more for my ſake, and I remember holy* Paul, *that was once a Perſecutor of honeſt-hearted Chriſtians, was afterwards content to be perſecuted for being ſuch an one himſelf. But let them laugh on, I am ſure I am a dying Man, and if I keep on to follow Chriſt, I ſhall ſhortly be in Heaven, and then above their ſcorns, where I am ſure they ſhall not come, if they repent not, and ſeek a Righteouſneſs above the Phariſees.*

I

I have read what righteouſneſs is, and now I will try it in my life, there is no more time for talk: I will up and go.

Caution.

Yea, and do ſo, thou Son or Daughter of God, for ſo I dare call thee, if thou holdeſt this reſolution to the death. Only let me *caution* thee this, whilſt thou art ſo ſet and reſolved upon the work; Remember that of thy Saviour, *Joh.* 15. 4, 5. *As the branch cannot bear fruit of it ſelf, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing.* And ſo *Phil.* 2. 13. *For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleaſure.* Again, *Rom.* 8. 26. *Likewiſe the Spirit*

helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.*

By theſe Texts I would put thee in mind of thine own weakneſs and ſelf-inſufficiency. Set to the working out thy ſalvation with fear & trembling; but look upon Chriſt thy Treaſury, that hath a ſtock of Grace and Strength for thee to ſpend upon till Death, and to all Eternity; and now let me intreat thee to form thy concluſion thus with the holy Apoſtle, *Phil.* 4.13. *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthneth me.* Thou mayeſt with Chriſt do wonders, but without him juſt nothing. *Ask and thou ſhalt have, ſeek and thou ſhalt find, knock and it ſhall be opened.*

And laſtly, I ſay unto thee, *Watch and pray, leſt thou enter into temptation.*

Now

Now the Lord bleſs thee, and make thy root to ſpread on the Mountain of the Lord; let his dew fall upon thee, and give thee to flouriſh as a pleaſant branch in the vineyard of thy God. Let not that curſe come near thee, It is a barren Tree, cut it down, why cumbers it the Ground? but be thou ever laden with Fruit, that Death may find thee mellow, and ripe for Heaven.

FINIS.

A POST-SCRIPT.

I Am ſufficiently aware of what exceptions the more curious may make againſt the management of this ſmall Diſcourſe, as,

1. That I have obſerved a Method ſomewhat too looſe.

2. That I have handled the Species before the Genus, that is, ſpoke to the nature of inherent Righteouſneſs, without giving any account of Righteouſneſs in general.

3. That I have ſcarce touched upon the other Species of Righteouſneſs, which lies in the active and paſſive Obedience of our Lord and Saviour.

4. That I have not handled fully the nature of inherent Righteouſneſs, that is the ſubject of the whole, having neglected in a manner the explication of any of its effects.

And laſtly, that I have inſiſted too little on the Doctrinal part.

Anſw.

Anſw. It may be ſome ſatisfaction to thee that I know my defects, before thou telleſt me of them; but thou muſt know,

1. That I intended to have delivered my whole mind on this ſubject in one ſheet, to make it as little chargeable as I could.

2. That I intended it for the meaner ſort of my People, whom by long obſervation I have found to underſtand me leaſt, when I ſpeak beſt, and moſt accurately.

3. I do not conceive my Method ſo looſe as thou may'ſt imagine, ſeeing I have all along kept cloſe to the parts of the Text (and if I miſtake not) they lie altogether in as good a poſture as the nature of things in their dependency can well bear.

2. And as to my ſpeaking ſo little to the Righteouſneſs of the Saints, as is treaſured up in the active and ſuffering Life and Death of the Lord Jeſus:

I reply thus;

1. I have not wholly omitted it, but have beſprinkled the whole with blood, that the attentive Reader may plainly ſee that I little dreamed that the pureſt inherent Righteouſneſs could be meritorious.

2. And as I was bound to follow the intendments of the Text, that points moſt directly at the Righteouſneſs of the ſouls and ſpirits of Men that muſt act them in their lives.

3. And I knew that it is this inward Righteouſneſs, the common People I ſpeak to, ſee leſs need of, and it is their ignorance of this, which is the ordinary Rock on which they ſplit, and it was my duty here to help to ſave if I could.

If this will not ſatisfie thee I cannot help it, I writ not to pleaſe all, but to profit ſome: If the Lord ſhall pleaſe to bleſs it to that end, it will content me, though it doth not thee.

AN

ELEGY

ON THE

Death of the Reverend & Pious

Mr. *Thomas Wadſworth*;

Sometime Preacher of the Goſpel in *Newington-Butts*, and late of *London*, who departed this life the 29*th*. of *October*, 1676.

READER, *prepare thine eye, for here's a ſight*
Can nothing leſs than floods of Tears invite;
Deep Waters come the ſtilleſt; and the Grief
That's greateſt, courts the Eyes to give Relief.
Come here you Stoicks, *let your Marble Eyes*
Swell big with grief, and pay their due Exciſe:

For

For here's a Theam *would make him*
ſhed good ſtore
Of Tears, that never knew to Weep
before.
The Reverend Wadſworth's *lately*
dead! What Eye
But Mourns the loſs of ſa much Piety?
A loſs indeed, which ought for to pro-
duce
A general Grief in Men of any uſe;
And ſuch a loſs, for which who will
not ſpend
A Tear, is not Learnings, nor Reli-
gions Friend.
Come all his Reverend Brethren, mourn
and weep,
Your Brother Wadſworth *now is fall'n*
aſleep.
And you his ſerious Hearers, now La-
ment
That Preacher's Death, whoſe life for
you was ſpent.
Eſteem it as a priviledge you have,
T' attend his precious Duſt unto the
Grave.

Then

Then ſtudy well (let that be all your Strife)
His Exhortation to a Holy Life.
Grief muſt Command your ſilence; but impart
In ſilent Tears, the Language of your Heart.
By many Storms and Tempeſts now at laſt
Our Wadſworth *on a bleſſed ſhore is caſt.*
He's bleſt indeed unto Eternity,
That preacht and liv'd Souls Immortality.
And having reach'd that Harbour of Delight,
It argues that he ſteer'd his courſe aright:
Now no afflicting pains can him come near;
Nor needs he Stone or Colick for to fear;
His Heavenly Father who knows what time's beſt,
Call'd up his Soul on his own Day of Reſt.

La-

Lament, O Dead-man's-Place, *thy Wretched caſe!*
Thy Candleſtick's remov'd out of its place:
Heaven has thought fit to give him a remove:
Thy ſhining Light's a fixed Star above.
Thus ere we dry our big-ſwell'd Eyes for One,
Tidings ſurpriſe us that another's gone.
So Reverend Wells, *and* Pledger's *ſnatcht away;*
They followed Janeway, *and* Venning's *day:*
Carmichel *ſucceeds them, but not long*
Ere that bleſt Soul was called up among
The uncloath'd Saints to ſing the heavenly Song.
And though he had an Elegy, *I'le ſay,*
He was a Light that Burned in his Day.

Mo-

Methinks I hear them all o're-joyed to
see,
Dear Wadsworth *added to their Com-*
pany:
Their Company is sweet, Heaven thinks
it best
To call such Saints to Everlasting
Rest.
And you Stargazing Tribe, should you
be Blest
To find a Star that's brighter than the
Rest,
'Tis pious Wadsworth's *Soul, for all*
Conclude,
He is a Star of the first Magnitude.

EPI-

EPITAPH.

READER, *ſtand off, and thy due diſtance keep;*
For in this Bed a Friend of Chriſt doth ſleep:
His Body *here's Interred, being Dead;*
But his bleſt Soul to Abram's *Boſom's fled:*
Heaven hath the Jewel, Earth doth keep in truſt
(For a ſhort time) the Reverend Wadſworth's *Duſt,*
Until the Reſurrection of the Juſt.

Secula vix referent quem tulit una dies.

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